

No. 2
March
1978

BUNJI



Many Tribes — One People

BACK TO DARWIN 1978

DR. STACK'S MESSAGE

"Now we want to say "thank you" and invite all southern Australians to see what we have achieved in this City. We would like to show them the 30,000 trees that have been planted ~~since~~ after the cyclone, the 9000 houses and flats that have been built or re-built; the splendid efforts of the Darwin Reconstruction Commission and the private sector of this City; the efforts of the City Corporation to return Darwin to the beautiful tropical City it was, and indeed, improve on it.

The vast majority of people in Darwin have come from other parts of Australia and have close friendship and family ties throughout this country. I invite you to make these ties stronger, come and see our northern City, our lack of racial discrimination, our varied people."

FRED FREE

Six charges against Fred Fogarty were dismissed by the magistrate on March 1st. The magistrate could not believe the police evidence.

Fred was only found guilty of 'walking without due care'. That is when he was bumped by a police car during the demonstration against uranium, last year. The full story is told in the magazine 'Farewell to Alms' (\$1 posted from PO Box 1293 Darwin).

A Message from the Gwalwa Daranki

Come back to Darwin in May, the Gwalwa Daranki will be glad to show our friends how the Blacks are still living. We will tell them of the way Darwins very own tribe has been treated in the one hundred years of white settlement and land speculation — the stolen land of the Larrakia. We will not be able to show our visitors Goondal, the ceremonial site where Dr Stack and the Army brass play golf behind the Barricades. The people coming back to Darwin will certainly hear from the Gwalwa Daranki. Oh yes, they will

"Tell Oenpelli people the truth" says secret report

BUNJI has been handed an important secret government paper called 'Uranium Development Proposals: Impacts on Aborigines', dated January 10th 1978.

Part of it says — 'Discussions held with people involved with the communities have indicated that:

The proposals (for uranium mining) have not been explained adequately to the local Aboriginal people or the Northern Land Council.

Consequently these people have not been in a position to comment on proposals, to give indication of its impact or to propose conditions to minimise the impact or to safeguard their lifestyles or themselves'. The paper suggests that the uranium companies 'be required to explain their proposals to the NLC and local people' at on-site inspections. The comments should be recorded on video tape. The last sentence reads — 'Before proceeding further with comments are sought on this approach'.

ARE COUNCILS WORKING ?

In some areas the people take an interest in their council. This is good. In other places no-one seems to care about the council and it gets taken over by the wrong people. Then these people can get a tight control on the council, making it hard to change anything. Here are three stories about Aboriginal councils. Mostly the people did not want their name printed.

THE FAMILY SET-UP

1. Councillor, they only help a few people, everyone they should help but they don't. Only all depends whichever president; only his family he helps, look after all his family. A few other things, trucks and things, broke down but they wont help unless president and his family.

When I went to court, president wrote a letter saying a lot of lies and thats why I didnt have any help 'cause the president has something against me. If presidents family in trouble with European law, he tell the judge he will punish them which he don't do.

Should be everyone get the same sort of treatment. That's why the government put council there, to help Aborigine. They only help a few.

THE EUROPEAN SET-UP

2. This man, European, who runs stores and he don't come back to committee; elected people, to see what supplies, he just please himself. Before, other bloke used to put it all through the committee what things they want for the works and all that. This man standing over, just like old stock camp boss. This man standing over just like old stock camp boss. Should do like committee — should run themselves for our rights.
Michael Loman and Arthur Dixon.

THE OPPORTUNISTS SET-UP

3. "The constitution of the Aboriginal Development Foundation says that 'the policy of the association shall be non-political'. This makes ADF nothing more than an extension of the DAA. Then the rules say that 'only persons acceptable to the executive committee shall become members of the ADF'. For special meetings, we are told 'special meetings may be called as deemed necessary'. All this would perhaps not be so important if it wasn't that the people who are employed by the ADF, also control it".

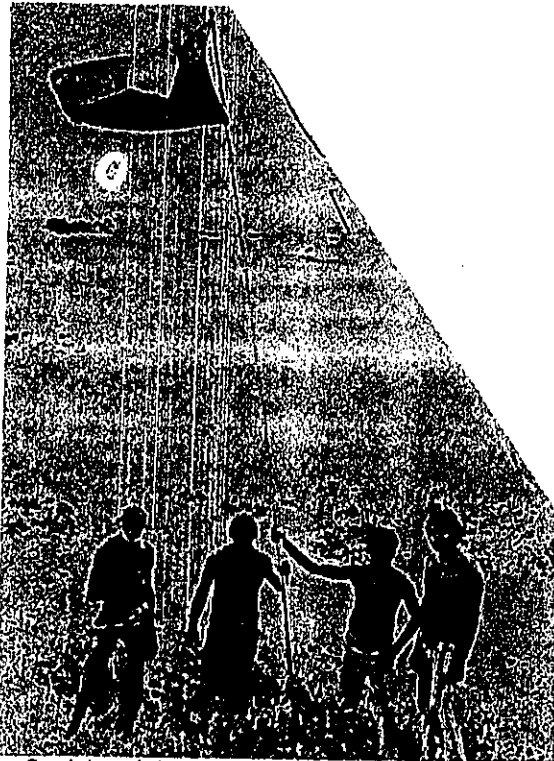
INSIDE: A WALK THROUGH KULALINK. 6 PAGES. 24 PHOTOS

'BOMB THE BLACKS'

"Some Australians believe that the Aborigines should be herded on to an off-shore island and bombed, a government investigation showed.

This view was repeatedly expressed as the most practical solution on what to do with the Aborigines. The report showed that relations between the white community and the Aboriginal population was a cause for grave concern."

This story comes from the Malaysian newspaper, The Straits Times (January 5th '78). The tribes must be told what white people are saying, behind our back.



Our photograph shows one group of Aborigines they did not bomb. In 1973 Norman Barral, Roy Mudpool, Billy Munji and Richard Rankin occupied Quail Island to stop they RAAF bombing this dreaming place.

BUNJI DONATIONS

BUNJI is the voice of the Gwalwa Daraniki Movement and was founded in August 1971. This special edition has been printed because the new Town Plan for Darwin has ignored the land claims of the Larrakia Tribe as recognised by the Interim Land Commissioner in 1975.

Objections to this kick in the guts to the Larrakia people close on March 30th.

BUNJI has its funds for this edition and donations are needed.

Send these to PO Box 3743 Darwin N.T.

THE TRAP part II

Last issue of Bunji began a discussion on how the concepts of 'traditional owners' and 'spiritual ties' to land are being misused. Our first article described the experience of the Larrakia tribe in Darwin who have had to make many changes to survive. This tried to show that it is not possible to say Aborigines are either traditional or else they are non-traditional. There is no distinction on this basis, because tradition is a history of change and adaptation.

The past meets the future

The report of Judge Fox tries very hard to make set rules about traditional land ownership. On page 278 there is a map dividing the uranium lands into blocks or 'estates' as he calls them. Later there is a list of 'traditional owners' for each block. For example, next to Dadjbagga are two names — Elizabeth and Michael.

To make this map with the names, an anthropologist talked to the old people to find out which members of the tribe are supposed to look after each place. These names are written in a book and a system from the past becomes a written rule in a modern system.

At least the police tell us first, "Anything you say will be taken down and may be used in evidence against you."

Tomorrow the mining companies might say, "We were told this block belongs to Charlie and Mary. Mary has died and Charlie wants us to mine."

In the past, the tribe who really owns that land might just spear or sing 'Charlie' for doing a wrong thing and the trouble was settled. This was because the rules worked for the protection of the majority. It could be that now the disagreements will become greater and will be settled in the courts or elsewhere, because of maps drawn in 1977.

Aboriginal people become more powerless to change things than in real traditional times if we accept the European ideas about private property ownership, the sacred law of capitalism.

Aborigines are fighting in the courts for land claims (on unalienated land only) having to give evidence of traditional ownership that is no more traditional than King Billy. Why?

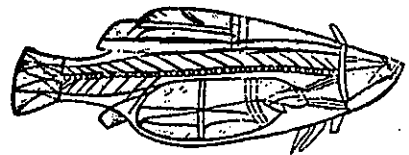
Firstly, Aborigines say they must do this because it is the European system that makes the rules. The important thing is to get back some land, they say.

Secondly, to Aborigines the word 'traditional' has a great deal more meaning than that in the dictionary. The word is symbolic for the days when the tribes were strong with real political power and self-governing. This memory of a past stability has been the only alternative to the European system.

Uranium has shown the tribes that the hard reality is that Blacks are now mixed up in a world-wide political and economic system.

Aborigines must have a clear view of what it means to be Aboriginal and of how to preserve and incorporate that into a strong front against the onslaught of capitalism.

Part III next issue — "What is the answer?"

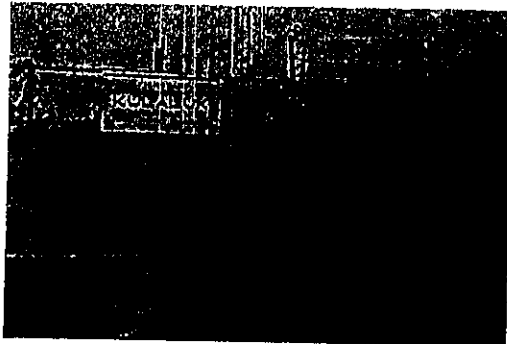


Graphic Systems Print.

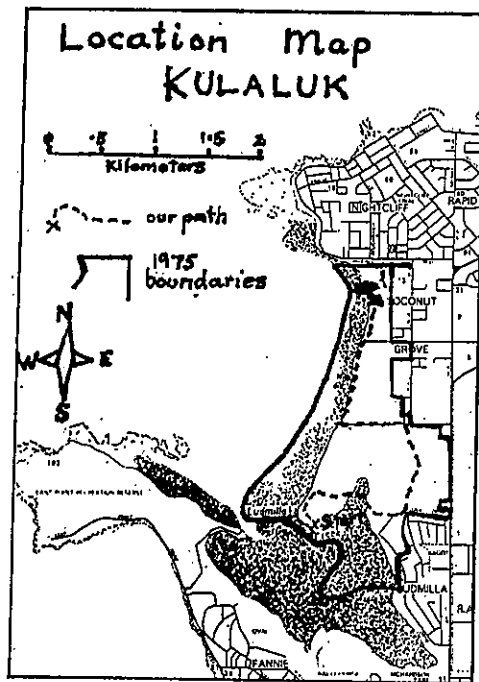
A WALK THROUGH KULALUK

IN WORDS AND PICTURES

A Special Edition of BUNJI — March 1978



The Fitzler Drive gate.



Come with us on a walk through Kulaluk, as a guest of the Larrakia tribe. Discover the secrets of this bushland refuge of eight hundred and fifty acres in the heart of sprawling Darwin.

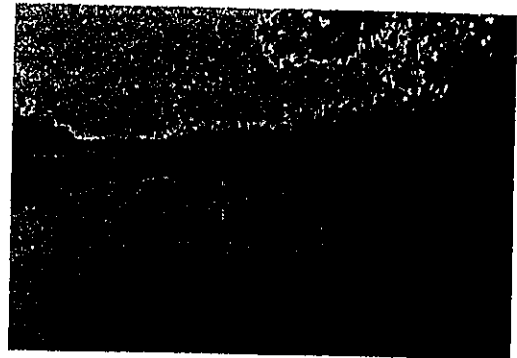
Let us start our walk at the southern boundary of the land claim, the steep muddy banks of a tidal creek. Twice each day the tide floods in with a rise of up to eight metres, but even on the lowest tides, as we find it today, there are plenty of fish in the salt water pools. Being a weekday, and very hot there are not the usual children from Bagot Reserve splashing and playing in the shallows while their mothers patiently cast a line from the sandbanks. No fear of the two resident crocodiles which are too small yet to be a danger.

There are huge mud-crabs too, a tasty meal, if a long hooked wire can force them from their holes amongst the mangrove roots.

Everywhere is mangroves, hundreds of metres on both sides of the creek, across the mudflats of the bay and anywhere the creeping hightides filter. Not a wasteland, but teeming with life and 'bush tucker'. Along with a hooked wire, a fishing line and a multi-barbed fish spear, the Bagot people often carry a tomahawk to split open the rotting deadwood and gather mangrove worms as an extra delicacy.

'Bagot beach', between the mudflats and the jungle, is dotted with the ashes of cooking fires heaped around with roasted shells that are gathered freely while the men are wading the shallows hoping to spear a stingray or mullet. The flagon bottles are a more convenient carrier than the giant shells of older times. These shell water-carriers can still be found, probably brought across the islands in visiting canoes.

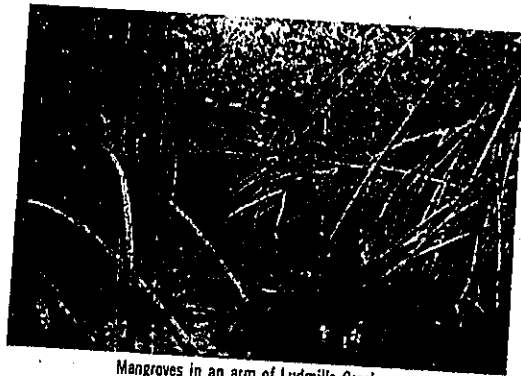
Behind the beach, the jungle is thick and tangled, continually enriching the sandy soil with falling leaves and forest litter. In this forbidding environment, the jungle fowl are left in peace to hatch their eggs in nests of hot sand.



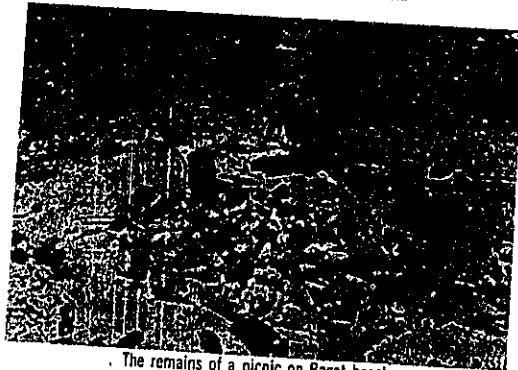
The banks of Ludmilla Creek at low tide.

A WALK THROUGH KULALUK

CONT.



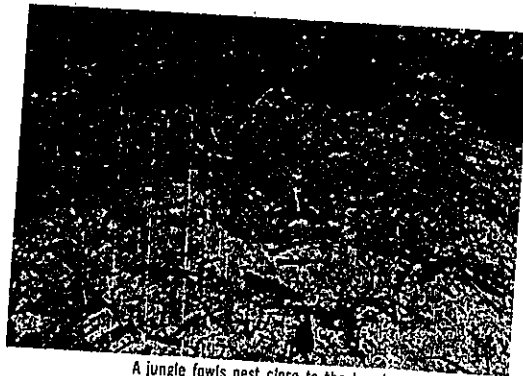
Mangroves in an arm of Ludmilla Creek.



The remains of a picnic on Bagot beach.



The floor of the rainforest.

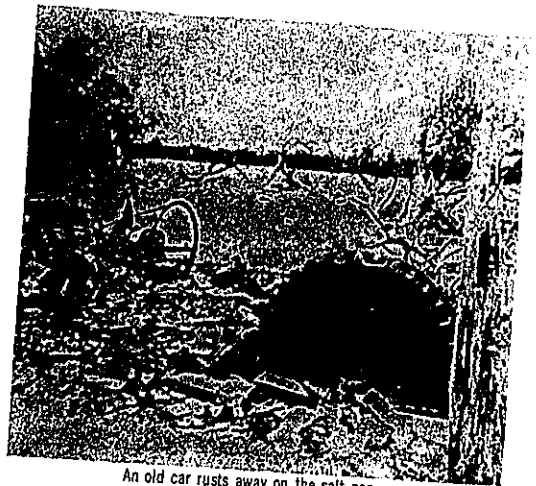


A jungle fowls nest close to the beach.

Push through the jungle, only about thirty metres wide along this stretch, and we are out onto the saltpan, the size of three football fields. It was in fact once used for football by Bagot teams and more recently as an unofficial speedway. The Gwalaw Daraniki has fenced off the saltpan which once again is loud with the cries of flocks of birds, startled by our intrusion. It hasn't taken long for the abandoned stock cars to rust away but the salt marsh plants will take much longer to recarpet this delicate environment.

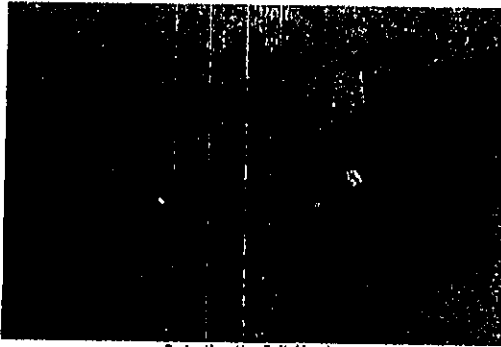
'Fish Camp' is ahead of us, atop an ancient sand dune where the forest survives only in patches. Clearing and activity by the army during the war, thirty five years ago, introduced the grasses and lantana that in turn fed destructive bushfires. The small group of residents here are hard at work clearing the grass and lantana to use the shallow top soil the old forest bed, to grow fine vegetables including sweet potato, mellons, peanuts and paw-paw. While the vegetables are growing, a tree planting project is in progress.

The results of two years work is already a land-mark. The fruits, flowers and shelter from this work are already attracting back the birds and wildlife, and if the occasional snake, goanna or possum goes into the cooking coals it is a minor loss compared to the destruction of the environment that has gone on for years in the developing city and in Kulaluk itself.



An old car rusts away on the salt pan.

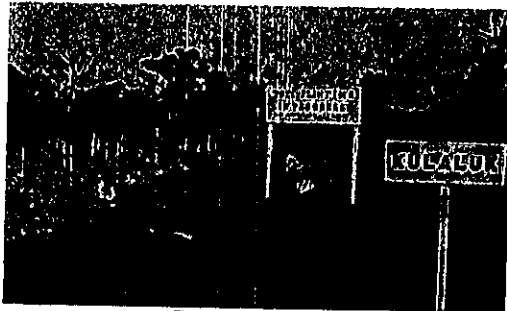
A WALK THROUGH KULALUK CONT.



Protecting the Salt Marsh.



Fred Fogarty in the garden.



The tree planting project.



A campsite.

This camp looks across the expensive flat that buffers 'Kulaluk South' from the suburb of Ludmilla. It is the old dump where most of cyclone wasted Darwin lies buried.

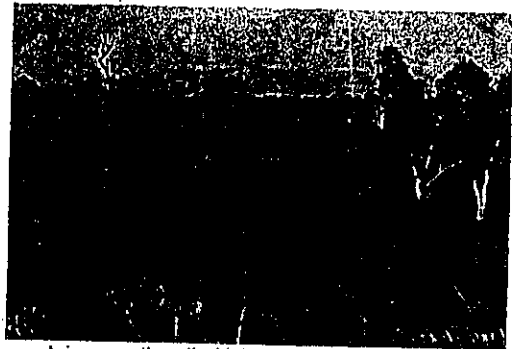
After a refreshing cup of tea and the latest news from the 'Kulaluk wireless' we head east over the area bulldozed by the City Council three years ago for extensions to the dump. Protests stopped the dump, without saving the gum trees. Fortunately the hardy suckers look like undoing the damage in time. They offer some privacy for someone's bush shelter.

Where the track follows the powerlines northward to Totem Road, the land dips down into a freshwater swamp which can be viewed from the heights of the Works Department earth dump, another intrusion that has devastated about ten acres.

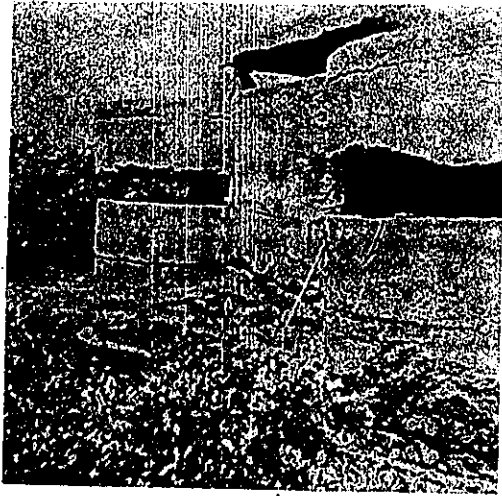
A few jabiru are out in the middle, making an amazing contrast to busy Bagot Highway immediately behind us.

Clambering down from the hill and wading knee deep, we follow the track sturdy milkwoods to Totem Road where one of the survey pegs clearly marks that corner boundary of the land claim, pegged by the Lands Department surveyors in 1975. From this marker the boundary runs along Coconut Grove to the fence line of Tropicus Nursery. The only all weather service track leads from this corner.

Skirting the wetlands, we follow this path eastward to reach the old Aboriginal cemetery. It is overgrown with a lonely single marked grave.



A view across the wetland between Totem Rd and Fitzer Dr.



war time fort on the beach.

A WALK THROUGH KULALUK CONT.

of tons of the white sand. Promises have been made to restore the area but in parts this is impossible. Where restoration is feasible, a few trees have been planted, only distinguished by the stakes showing above the tall grass.

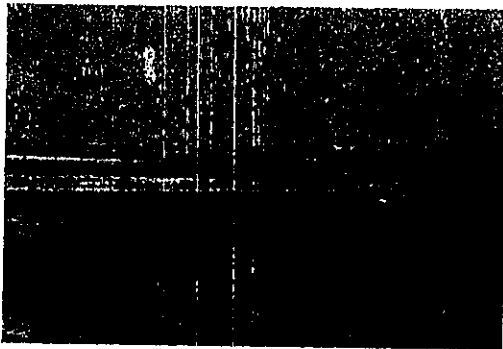
A placid lily pond, narrowly missed by the bulldozers, illustrates the type of country traversed by the pipeline.

We must now cross the two leases and see the effect of unplanned speculation. The contrast shows up on the aerial photograph. Despite the efforts of the Aboriginines to halt the subdivision of this part, culminating in violent clashes some years ago, the two leases are shown as FU, future urban, on the Town Plan. This is a proposal that must be opposed by every means.

As an incentive to the sale of their sea-level subdivision, the developers actually began to cut down the mangroves to give an ocean view.

This swarth can be seen on the aerial photograph, near the camp clustered around the tree on the old jungle fowl mound. This simple camp of iron huts is the symbol of defiance by the Larrakia people. It receives many visitors, particularly for social gatherings away from the restrictive institutionalised Bagot Reserve of the self-consciousness of suburbia. The campsite is also ideal for dancing and ceremonies of mourning or celebration and in this function is no less important than a church.

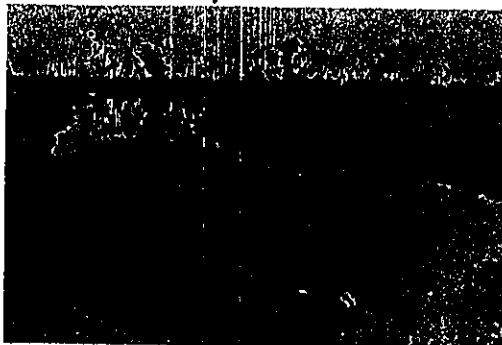
Bobby Secretary hopes that our tour of Kulaluk has convinced you of the significance of this battle and that he can look forward to your support.



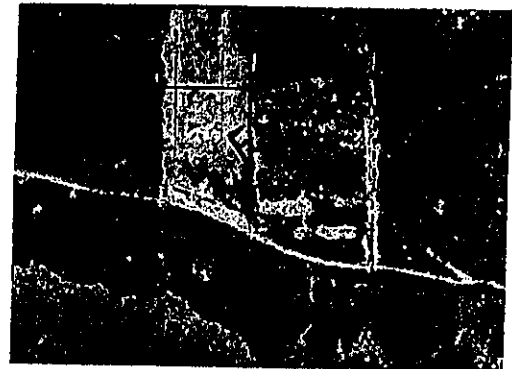
The mudflats of the Bay — seaward side of the mangroves.



A lily pond behind Bakhita village.



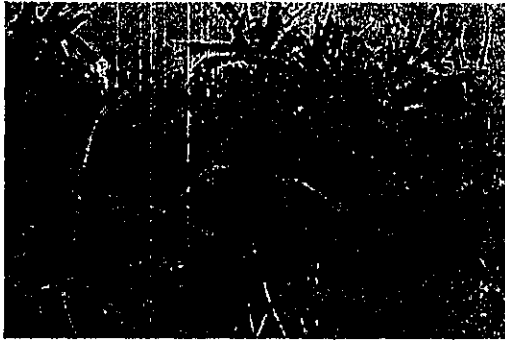
Erosion caused by pipelaying and sand mining Coconut Grove.



Aerial photo of the two leases: Zoned FU — Future Urban.



Some residents and visitors at Bobby's camp.



Replanting the original Coconut Grove.



Bobby secretary at home.

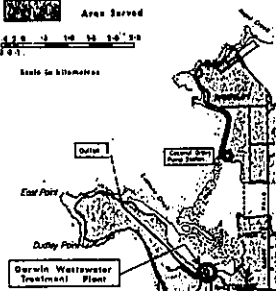
Darwin Central Zone Sewerage System

Legend

- Gravity Main
- - - Rising Main
- Area Served

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

Scale in Kilometres



SAVE KULALUK

The Town Planners have already begun cutting out pieces of Kulaluk. "We will just take this little corner," they say. They want to sell a very important piece of Kulaluk bushland at the end of Totem Road.

The answer to the Gwalaw Daraniki letter was "this is not a valid objection".

Last month the people from Fish camp wrote their own letter. This is their letter to the Town Planners — "In 1975 the Interim Aboriginal Land Commissioner, the late Judge Ward recommended that vacant land, lot 7649 be included in the Kulaluk claim.

The new town plan has left lot 7649 out of the Kulaluk claim. We object strongly to this as lot 7649 has the only wet weather access track to Fish Camp.

This track is in constant use in dry weather for carriage of water for camp use and the survival garden. The blockage of the track through lot 7649 in this case would kill off Aboriginal initiative.

Also as important, this track is in use for transportation of old age pensioners to hospital when there is no alternative track of a wet. The blockage of the track through lot 7649 could well mean the matter of life or death."

signed Fred Fogerty.

STOP THE BUREAUCRATS

There are four major threats to the preservation of the Kulaluk bushland. They all come from the bureaucrats with a long history of insensitivity to environment and a total disregard of Aborigines.

The most urgent is the revised town plan. It has ignored the Kulaluk boundaries in two important areas.

The second is the constant threat of the 'Palmerston Freeway! As the map shows, this would mean total devastation of the whole area.

The third is the path of the sewerage easement, where the damage has been done but not restored as was promised. The map shows where the 'easement' carved through Kulaluk.

The fourth threat is the road planned to follow the dotted line of the sewerage easement. They must all be opposed, by any methods.

DARWIN

PALMERSTON ARTERIAL ROAD GENERAL SITE PLAN

